

Exhibit 4

<https://buffalonews.com/news/local/mayor-brown-didnt-budget-money-for-speed-zone-cameras-but-hes-not-giving-up-on-them/>

Mayor Brown didn't budget zone cameras – but he's not giving up on them

Deidre Williams

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Cameras placed outside schools to enforce school speed zones have been controversial.

Robert Kirkham

Deidre Williams

Buffalo Mayor Byron W. Brown did not include any revenue from school speed cameras in his **2021-22 budget proposal**.

But his administration says that doesn't mean he is abandoning the controversial School Zone Safety Program.

"This action in no way indicates a change in the mayor's commitment to the program or the overwhelming evidence of the program's effectiveness," the city's Finance Commissioner Donna J. Estrich during the Common Council budget hearings Wednesday.

The issue, she said, "should continue to be debated and discussed outside of the framework of the budget because it is ultimately about public safety."

The current city budget includes \$2.3 million in revenue from the speed camera program. To date, the revenue generated is \$1.84 million.

Estrich cited several factors in the decision not to account for any revenue in the budget for the program this year, including pending local legislation that seeks to end the program and wanting the city's control board to find the budget structurally unsound. She also said the administration would like the Council to take more time to review data from the program.

The Common Council and Brown's administration have been in conflict for about a year over speed camera enforcement in school zones. Most recently, **two sides are at odds over the required legislative procedure** to remove the cameras. An official measure passed by the Common Council in April to end the program was defeated. The measure passed by what could prove to be a 6-3 veto-proof tally.

The legislative action called for removing the speed cameras by September and replacing them with radar speed signs and installing nonpunitive traffic calming measures in school zones, such as speed humps. It also changes the school zone speed limit from 15 mph to 20 mph and requires the city to place "school" pavement markings and crosswalks by schools.

Brown has said he is not going to sign the legislation for immediate passage because the proper process was not followed.

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But Council President Darius G. Pridgen said the Council's vote was appropriate, and the Council is awaiting Brown's action.

In addition to not budgeting anticipated revenue for the speed camera program in the 2022 budget, Brown's administration did not include a revenue line for stop-arm cameras on school buses because the program has not been completed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Brown administration spokesman Michael J. DeGeorge said he expects discussions on an agreement with Buffalo Public Schools to implement the stop-arm camera program to take place before the return of a predictable school schedule in the fall.

Estrich said the administration eliminated the two revenue lines for the speed zone cameras and the stop-arm program to avoid having either the Buffalo Fiscal Stability Authority or the city's three credit rating agencies determine the budget is structurally unsound.

The School Zone Safety Program sets a 15 mph speed limit around 20 public, private and charter schools. Drivers captured on camera traveling at least 2 mph receive a citation mailed to the car's registered owner. The city gets \$3 for each \$50 citation. Sensys Gatso, the camera company that issues the citations, receives \$14.

The program has drawn criticism that it was poorly rolled out and executed. Others have complained that the cameras target the city's most impoverished residents by placing many of the cameras in high-poverty, minority neighborhoods.

But the camera company, the Brown administration and some residents say the program is working and saving lives. About half of the citations were issued to people who live outside the city, and the cameras have increased compliance by Buffalo drivers to 82% since February 2020.

The school speed zone cameras are part of a comprehensive approach to safety outside schools by the Brown administration that includes signage, flashing beacons, street and sidewalk safety improvements, crossing guards and police enforcement, DeGeorge said.

Estrich, during the budget hearing, said the Common Council has not provided alternate sources of funding to replace the revenue from the speed cameras.

"There is no question that the executive department will do what needs to be done to keep our children safe," she said. "But it also must be noted that the Council's approach to throw the baby out with the bath water is not fiscally sound."

She added, "It's simply a debate that is better left outside this budget agreement."

Deidre Williams

I am the Buffalo City Hall reporter for The Buffalo News. I've been a staff reporter at The News since 1999.
